

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 CU-04 INR-10 NSAE-00 AID-05 USIA-06

AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 PA-01

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-----106311 041845Z /50

R 031807Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8131

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NESCO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, ETEL, PORG, UNESCO

SUBJECT: UNESCO: FRENCH VIEWS ON TACTICS RE THE
DECLARATION ON MASS MEDIA

1. DELOFFS MET MARCH 3 WITH BERNARD BLIN, FOREIGN
SECRETARY OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL TELEVISION CORPORATION.
BLIN IS ALSO PROFESSOR OF COMMUNICATION THEORY AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF PARIS II, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE MEDIA COM-
MITTEE OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO, IN
WHICH LATTER CAPACITY WE MET WITH HIM. BLIN WAS
MEMBER OF FRENCH DELEGATION TO 19TH GENERAL CONFERENCE.

2. BLIN CONVEYED TO US HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT THE U.S.
GOVERNMENT REPS CURRENTLY LACK CREDIBILITY WHEN THEY
TALK ABOUT FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA, BECAUSE THEY PROCEED
FROM THE PREMISE THAT THERE IS COMPLETE FREEDOM OF THE
MEDIA IN THE U.S. THIS, SAYS BLIN, IS NOT TRUE.

NOT ONLY IS THERE THE VOA, BUT THERE IS THE FEDERAL
COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION, WHICH ISSUES LIMITED-TERM
LICENSES FOR TV STATIONS. FURTHERMORE, THE HIGH COST
OF GETTING INTO THE NEWSPAPER OR TV BUSINESS IN THE U.S.

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MEANS THAT ONLY THOSE ENTITIES WITH CONSIDERABLE MONEY
ARE REALLY ABLE TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS. WHILE THIS IS
NOT GOVERNMENT CONTROL, IT DOES MEAN THAT THERE IS
SOMETHING LESS THAN COMPLETE FREEDOM FOR THE EXPRESSION
OF OPINION. IN THE AREA OF GENERAL FREEDOM OF INFOR-
MATION, HE REFERRED TO A "JACKSON AMENDMENT," WHICH HE
DESCRIBED AS RESTRICTING THE PROVISION OF SCIENTIFIC AND

TECHNICAL INFORMATION THAT HAS NO NATIONAL SECURITY INTEREST, AND RESTRICTING IT NOT ONLY FROM EASTERN EUROPEAN DISSEMINATION BUT WESTERN EUROPE AS WELL. THIS IS ALL FAIRLY WIDELY KNOWN, SAYS BLIN, AND IF YOU TAKE THE POSITION THAT THIS DOESN'T ADD UP TO GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF MEDIA POLICY, YOU ARE NOT BELIEVED.

3. BLIN BELIEVES THAT U.S. CREDIBILITY WOULD BE ENHANCED AND U.S. TACTICAL EFFECTIVENESS INCREASED IF THE U.S. POSITION WOULD BE BASED ON THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT THAT GOVERNMENTS DO HAVE A RIGHT TO SET SOME SORT OF OUTER LIMITS ON THE MEDIA. BUT, HE SAYS, WHAT IS NEEDED IS A FORMULA FOR MAKING SUCH AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT WITHOUT OPENING THE FLOOD GATES OF GOVERNMENTAL RESTRICTION. HE DID NOT HAVE THE FORMULA.

4. BLIN SAID THERE MAY ACTUALLY BE A MORE DEMOCRATIC MEDIA SITUATION IN SWEDEN, FOR EXAMPLE, WHERE THE GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIZES MINORITY-VIEW NEWSPAPERS.

5. THE MEETING, ARRANGED AT PERMDEL'S INITIATIVE, WAS EXTREMELY CORDIAL, AND BLIN SEEMED GENUINELY GRATEFUL THAT WE HAD TAKEN INITIATIVE. (THIS ACTUALLY GREW OUT OF THE INITIATIVE OF MR. YVES BRUNSVIK, CHAIRMAN OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL COMMISSION, WHO LAST FALL PROPOSED THE PRODUCTIVE MEETING BETWEEN BLIN AND FRED HARTLEY OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IO/UNESCO. HOWEVER, BLIN SEEMS TO REGARD TODAY'S MEETING AS A NEW INITIATIVE, AND IS GIVING US CREDIT FOR IT.) HE SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH US, AND IN PARTICULAR, VOLUNTEERED TO SEE US AGAIN SHORTLY, AFTER HE HAS RECEIVED AN ADVANCE COPY OF THE SECOND OFFICIAL VERSION OF THE MASS MEDIA DECLARATION DRAFT, WHICH IS CURRENTLY ON THE DESK OF DG M'BOW. TORRES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INFORMATION MEDIA, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PARIS07811
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780099-0797
Format: TEL
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803109/aaaadovu.tel
Line Count: 102
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7c9024b9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3125445
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UNESCO: FRENCH VIEWS ON TACTICS RE THE DECLARATION ON MASS MEDIA
TAGS: AORG, ETEL, PORC, MASS, UNESCO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7c9024b9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014